

Mainstream

by Spiegel

THE MERGER

An agreement, signed by WNTC representatives Robert O'Brien and John Dalphin and WCCT representatives Ted Perkins and Roy Krause was presented at the student council meeting Monday Feb. 26, and brought about the solution to one of the most widely publicized campus debates in the past few years.

As of May 15, 1961, when the Student Council voted in a secret ballot nine to five in favor of extending temporary recognition to WCCT, the competition between these two major radio outlets has been highly pitched. Last Monday night the council voted 14 to one in favor of recognizing WCCT for the remainder of the year.

In September, as reported in last week's C. I., both WNTC and WCCT plan a merger in which a network consisting of two stations will replace the two existing independent outlets. Under this agreement the network will function under one board and one constitution. That is, in effect it will operate as a single organization — cooperating with each other, both financially and in the programing area. The reader should note that a danger exists here.

WCCT was created out of a need existing on campus for a higher level of music being broadcast to the students. This need is to a large extent responsible for the "rebel" station's popularity. Because of this popularity the student council has allowed the station to continue to bring its "music to study by" to students since last May. It therefore becomes obvious that IF the young station no longer has to compete in order to hold on to student council recognition there is a danger that WCCT may cease to emphasize the differences, on which rests their popularity, and tend towards assimilating to their network partner (WNTC).

On the other hand it may be that WNTC will assimilate to WCCT, or perhaps it will be the network's policy to emphasize these differences and each station will continue to operate as they have in the past. If this becomes the case then there is no problem. However, if WCCT lowers its standards as a result of this merger, then it is the student listener who must take the loss and neither of the stations for they will continue to operate in this manner.

This columnist does not believe that the present leaders of WCCT will allow this to happen. After all, it was these same leaders that broke away from WNTC last year because of these same differences. However, the danger lies in the future, perhaps after the present members of the station are relieved of their positions. It is therefore the duty of the present members of the station to take steps after the merger has been completed to insure the elimination of this danger. With this done, the way becomes paved for improvement instead of possible disintegration.

As part of this plan is to insure against destruction in programming quality, this columnist suggests the complete removal of rock and roll music which presently is relegated to weekend spots only. Since there are two network stations broadcasting simultaneously the same music, it is both wasteful and unnecessary to continue its use on the station that represents "music to study by". Furthermore, definite policy should be initiated in an effort to try to improve the musical quality.

Since WNTC has emphasized in the past the need for training D.J.'s, this columnist suggests that all D.J.'s, if they must be trained on the air, be trained over WNTC and actual voice broadcasts be kept down to a minimum over WCCT. This can be another big step in the improvement in the listening quality of WCCT.

As both stations have improved considerably in their coverage this past year, the competition has been a definite advantage of student listeners. Now with this competition ended, a question arises over the possibilities of further improvement over both outlets. The answer, of course, lies somewhere in the future, but much can be done now to insure against a negative response. It is sincerely hoped that those members of the network in September give serious thought to the purposes and objectives for each station in the years to come. If this is not done the merger may end in a double failure.